



Safer Seven

On: Sarah's Law



1. Sarah's Law

The Child Sex Offenders Disclosure Scheme, or Sarah's Law, is in place across England and Wales.

This makes it possible for anyone to formally ask their local police force if someone with access to a child has a record of committing child sexual offences.

2. Why was Sarah's law developed?

Following Sarah's abduction and death in 2000, her parents launched a campaign calling for a UK version of what is known as Megan's Law in the United States.

A Home Office review had previously decided against a Megan's Law for the UK.

After piloting Sarah's Law in 4 police areas in 2008, it was rolled out across England and Wales in April 2011.

3. What is Sarah's Law?

Sarah's Law allows anyone to formally ask the police if someone who has access to a child has a child sexual offences record.

On request, the police will confidentially reveal those details to the person who is most able to protect that child if it is in the interest of the child to do so. Usually, this information is given to parents, carers or guardians.

4. What happens after a request is made?

If West Midlands Police make a disclosure, they will do so only in person and not in writing.

Also any disclosure made must be kept confidential. Legal action may be taken if the information is disclosed to anyone else.

5. When did it go live online?

The option to make an online referral has been available since June 2019.

Why?

To make West Midlands Police services more accessible to vulnerable members of the public. Since June 2019, 57% of the requests received have been via the online form.

6. How can I make a disclosure request?

- Via West Midlands Police online referral form
- Visiting a local police station

Please note that an online referral may take up to 24 hours to process. If you are reporting an emergency, or are concerned that someone is at risk of immediate harm you must dial **999**.

7. For more information on Sarah's Law and safeguarding children please visit:

- West Midlands Police <https://www.west-midlands.police.uk/your-options/sarajs-law>
- Government guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sex-offender-disclosure-scheme-guidance>
- The NSPCC website's <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>
- Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership <https://safeguarding.dudley.gov.uk/safeguarding/>